

Health Effects of Palm Oil

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ABSTRACT Increasingly, over the past 40 years, the conception of diet has undergone major changes. Many of these changes involve changes in dietary intake of fats and oils. There has been an increasing consumption of partially hydrogenated *trans*- vegetable oils and a decreasing intake of lauric acid-containing oils. Although popular literature usually attribute an increased risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) to elevated levels of serum cholesterol, which in turn are thought to derive from an increased dietary intake of saturated fats and cholesterol. The palm oil and palm kernel oil are high in saturated fatty acids, about 50% and 80% respectively and are esterified with glycerol. In developing countries, vegetable oils are replacing animal fats because of the cost and health concerns. It is reassuring to know that the consumption of palm oil as a source of dietary fat does not pose any additional risks for coronary artery disease when consumed in realistic amounts as part of a healthy diet.